

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 were pending in the above-captioned application, with claims 1, 4, 7 and 15 amended herein, and claims 3 and 29 canceled, in order to more clearly define and fully protect Applicants' invention.

Reconsideration and allowance of all claims 1, 2 and 4-28 is believed appropriate and is respectfully requested.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the interview held November 10, 2004 between Examiner Ortiz, Philip D. Coleman and Robert A. Mercuri of assignee UCAR Carbon Company Inc., and the undersigned, during which time the claimed invention and cited art were discussed.

During the November 10, 2004 interview, it was agreed that claim 1 would be allowable provided the limitations of claim 3 were incorporated thereinto. This has been done herein, with the cancellation of claim 3 and amendment of claim 4 to correct its dependency. In addition, claim 7 has been amended to add the expression "at least", as supported in the specification at paragraph [0026] (page 10).

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Accordingly, claim 1, and all claims 2 and 4-14 depending therefrom, should now be in condition for allowance.

With respect to independent claim 15, the nature of the claimed invention and the disclosure and import of the Singer et al. reference were discussed. It was agreed during the interview that, provided claim 15 was limited to the use of calcined coke (see, for example, paragraph [0017], page 6), and a declaration was submitted establishing the differences between the semi-coke of Singer et al. and the calcined coke of the invention along with an explanation of the importance of the claimed particle sizes and proportions, claim 15 would be allowable.

To that end, claim 15 has been amended herein to limit the coke employed to calcined coke; claim 29 has been canceled as a result. In addition, attached is a declaration of inventor Irwin C. Lewis, describing the differences between semi-coke and calcined coke and explaining how one skilled in the art would not understand the two materials to be equivalents, and discussing the importance of the claimed particle sizes and proportions.

Thus, it is believed that claim 15 and all claims 16-28 depending therefrom are allowable.

During the November 10, 2004 interview, the recent submission of additional art by a third party was discussed. Examiner Ortiz indicated that, since some of the references are not English language documents, and only partially translated in the submission, she would have to obtain a complete translation before considering them.

It is pointed out, however, that none of the documents in the third party submission discloses or suggests the addition of fibers to an electrode blend after 50% of the mix cycle has been completed (indeed, none suggest adding fibers at any point after mixing has begun). Moreover, none of the submitted documents discuss or disclose the inclusion of a particulate filler in the claimed size range or in the claimed proportions in a stock blend.

The only document even remotely relevant is the Sato et al. Japanese publication entitled "Thermal Shock Resistance And Fracture Toughness Of Graphite With Different Arrangement Of Coke Grain Size And Porosity." In this publication, the effects of particle size on fracture toughness are discussed. However, no disclosure of the use of Applicants' unique particle size distribution or proportions is to be found in this document.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that nothing in the third party citations renders a claim of the above-captioned application unpatentable.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all pending claims 1, 2 and 4-28 are now in condition for allowance. Such action is earnestly sought. If there remains any matter which prevents the allowance of any of these claims, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned, collect, at 615-242-2400 to arrange for another interview which may further expedite prosecution.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), Applicants request a two-month extension of time to respond to the Action of June 28, 2004, extending the time to respond from September 28, 2004 to November 28, 2004. The Commissioner is authorized to charge the fee of \$430 pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.17(a)(2), as well as any other fees due attendant to the filing of this response, to Deposit Account 21-0010.

Respectfully submitted,



James R. Cartiglia
Registration No. 30,738
WADDEY & PATTERSON
A Professional Corporation
Customer No. 23456

ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANTS

Waddey & Patterson
414 Union Street, Suite 2020
Bank of America Plaza
Nashville, TN 37219
(615) 242-2400

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